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The Dance of the Witches: Opening the Devil's Eye

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Saturnian Musings on Mercurial Subjects

Pursuant to my work on the Art of the "Twilight Sleep" or the Trance, the topic has come up many times about the best way to achieve a good, workable trance state when performing acts of Witchcraft.

The answer is simple enough: there is no "best" way. Each person, being an individual, is predisposed to a variety of techniques and leanings, which makes some people react well to very abstract trance-praxes, and others only respond well to very rigid, concrete, somatic methods.

The trance is important for many reasons, but chiefly because it allows for new modes of perception, which in turn allow for the spiritual forces invoked in acts of witchery to be experienced in such a manner that their potential for transformation is increased. Their impact is on a more immediate level, one that can be experienced, in some manner, by the consciousness of the practitioner. When craft is done with heart and faith, and with skill, it is effective regardless of the state of mind of the witch; however, the pleasure and depth of the experience is increased a thousandfold when the spiritual motions of the Art are made apparent.

Some acts of craft require the trance to be effective in any meaningful way: divination, for instance, requires a shift into a state wherein subtle realities and messages are not only apparent, but able to be communicated.

I have written at length about the need to change more than one's individual, moment-to-moment perspective to **truly** achieve the trance; one needs to change the basic worldview and understanding of their relationship to what appears to us as the "world around us". A deeper perspective change is really needed to appreciate what the "trance" entails. I have said that the "trance" is already ongoing, already a part of us; and this is quite true, however, where one person can take those words, and really find the necessary passivity to actualize that reality, others have difficulty.

This does not imply some lack on anyone's part; it is just a matter of Fate that not all people approach trancework in the same way. For some, extreme measures such as self-mortification and even substances need to be introduced to some degree, to get the needed expansion of awareness and change of perspective. For others, ritual is needed. For some, just "letting go" and realizing that the feeling of "being here" and "nature all around" are not actually TRULY how we understand them, and realizing that "me here"

and "Nature all around" are two aspects of their greater being, and thus "making the leap" between the lesser, limited perception and the greater perception of wholeness, is just easy to do.

Devil Take the Hindermost

I have decided to write this short essay to communicate another technique for achieving the Twilight Sleep, the trance, which is also known as the Waking Dream, the Paradisal Expansion, the "Devil's eye open", and many other names.

This technique, the "Dance of the Witches", is not really a dance; but it requires certain ritual actions, done in a certain manner, to achieve it's aim. This technique is not like the "Mantle" technique, in which a person goes passive and allows themselves to dissolve the boundaries between themselves and what seems to be "nature all around". This is not a technique that uses breathing, or the sounds of nature; or even entheogens. This technique is for people who need a more concrete method of awakening to Twilight.

To perform this technique, it is vital that you read and understand my famous "two bits of advice"- for they are the basis of this technique. For the avoidance of confusion, I will write them here.

* * *

"...When doing any kind of Craft Rite, from a simple Housle all the way to the greatest of wisdom or power workings, it is important to keep two simple factors in mind, two understandings that will make any ritual a truly moving and powerful experience. First, always remember that all things are connected, that no two forces or beings are separate within the great Body of Nature; therefore, any invocation, any thought or feeling has an affect that is tangible, even across what seem to be vast reaches of space or even time.

If you allow yourself to rest in the secure knowledge that all things are united, and that all motions and events and even words and thoughts echo through an intimate, inter-locked natural system of relationship and Fate, you will be more able to appreciate the affects of your invocations and ritual motions, and more able to 'feel' them bringing about the needed and desired transformations on the subtle level. Keeping the understanding of connectivity firmly in mind and trusting it implicitly is a foremost vital thing to bear with you in your rites.

Secondly, when you perform rites and make invocations, or anything, always gently allow yourself to be as deliberate and steady as possible- when I say this, I mean that you

should always speak, act, move, and even think with a deliberate, planned out, almost "slow" feel; this is a good way to fall into a deep trance that we like to call "Slow time". When you lift a forked wood or a rod or a bowl, when you make invocations, let your every action be as even, steady, and deliberate as possible; these are powerful actions, sacred actions, and deserving of your EVERY BIT of awareness and attention. When you speak, allow your words to flow steadily and calmly, resonating with deliberate focus.

The mind will try to "speed up" on you, but gently keep it reigned in, and let awareness be deep, steady, and FULLY absorbed on what you are doing, not matter how minor it seems. The power of the rite, the motions, all suddenly increase in amazing ways. Some experienced folk like to get into trances before the start of the rite, but others know another truth: that deliberately and steadily paying full attention to the motions of the Rite can itself be a door into the Trance, and in this way, some find it easier than "putting on the Mantle" before they begin. It is simply another approach to this (or any other) Rite. Try both, or use both as you feel the need.

You will discover that these two bits of advice greatly increase any rite's power and affect: the rewarding feeling of any rite is increased when the rite participants are resting in the secure awareness of the interconnectivity of all things, and celebrating every word and motion of a holy rite with the ultimate pure, focused awareness and deliberate steadiness."

* * *

The key to the Witch's Dance is right there. Not only do you have to have faith that your position in Fate echoes your actions, intentions, and words into every other portion of Fate, you must also TAKE THIS STEADY.

Every single movement and motion in the Witch's Dance is to be done with FULL AWARENESS. That means that from the start, you empty your mind of any desire to enter into a trance state, and you do not sit around thinking about what this rite "will accomplish". You stay in the HERE and NOW.

When you pick up a cord or a cup, and carry it somewhere, you Do Just That. You turn the full force of your awareness on the item you are holding and carrying, and you just stay with it. You watch, with excruciating attention, the item itself and everything you do with it. When you make an invocation or a chant, your awareness and attention has to go into EVERY word and every single SOUND that comes out of your mind, mouth, and being.

This is what causes the trance. Slowly, steadily and with full Awareness focusing your being on what you happen to be doing here and now, and allowing nothing else to come between you and your immediate reality. I know it sounds simple, but you will find that the mind runs off and tries to speed up a lot. You may have to practise this a bit before it

begins to work for you. I know it also sounds too easy to be effective, but that is the miracle of awareness. So simple, and yet so hard, and so penetratingly deep.

A Circle and Three Sides for the 'Auld Horn King

You begin by marking or imagining a circle on the ground, with an equilateral triangle in it, pointing east. you should have an Arthame or a double-edged knife, a cord, and a cup and bowl. Make an altar to the Two-Horned King, outside of your circle, east of it, where the triangle points. You can visualize the altar, or actually have a space of ground or a low table of dark wood or a tree stump, covered with greenery, dried and green leaves, bones and bits of antler, candles, with a centerpiece of some two-horned animal's skull, such as a buck or a goat. The ideal altar for this operation has the word "DHULKARNEN" painted in red on it's front. I find it just as easy to visualize as to improvise. My personal favorite time for this rite is in the woods at night, under a large moon, with flour used to mark out the circle and triangle, because of how ghostly it glows.

In these traditional circle-and-triangle workings devoted to the Secret Lord of the Witch-faith, the altar would typically be inside the center of the triangle. Not so with this rite.

To start the rite, you go to the west a ways from your circle and altar, and close your eyes, to calm yourself. At this point, you must imagine yourself in darkness, something that is not hard to do with your eyes closed, and really not hard to do if you do this rite after the sun has set.

When you are ready, you open your eyes, and look east to the altar a ways away, and imagine a light from the altar, (a Light from the East) is beckoning you. This is actually simple to do if you have an actual altar, with a candle or two burning on it.

Walk towards the altar. When you reach the western rim of the circle, stop, raise your two hands and touch the tips of your thumbs and the tips of your index fingers together at the same time, forming a triangle with your two hands, a triangle that you can look through. Look through it at the altar, and frame the light in this triangle, and slowly pronounce the following phonetic formula:

OZ. AH. EL.

Drag the syllables out.

Then, step into the circle and go to the four implements, (the cord, the Arthame, the cup, and the bowl) which should be right in the center of the Triangle. Kneeling, hold your hands over them and say

**"I bless these holy implements in the name of the Devil
The Great Reverser, Secret Lord of the Wise
Powers above the Land and below it, take heed."**

Then stand straight up, holding the cord out before you, and walk directly towards the altar, and when you reach the east, walk counterclockwise around the circle one full time, arriving back at the east, and then keep walking till you are at the north, stop, kneel, and put the cord down. As you lie it on the ground, slowly pronounce the following phonetic formula:

BEN. ZOH. ZEE. UH.

Now you return to the center, and retrieve the Arthame, and stand up, holding it out in front of you, facing the altar, of course. As you walk with these items, you just remember to do it slowly, steadily, and with your awareness fully on what you are doing- walking and holding this item out before you.

Walk straight towards the altar with the Arthame, and when you reach the eastern tip, walk counterclockwise around the circle fully once, arriving back at the east, and when you do, kneel and place the Arthame down, slowly pronouncing the following phonetic formula as you do:

BAH. SAH. JAWN.

Now you return to the center, pick up the cup and bowl, and holding them out in front of you, facing the altar, you walk towards it. When you get to the east, you go counterclockwise around the circle, arriving at the east, again, and you keep going counterclockwise till you arrive at the south. Then, you kneel and place the cup and bowl at the south point, slowly pronouncing the following phonetic formula as you do:

AH. KARE. UH.

Like with all of these formulas, you should drag the syllables out, slowly, deeply. And your mind should be nowhere else; your whole gentle, firm focus should be on every single sound and intonation that is coming out of your mouth; you are not just the source of these sounds, but the sounds themselves. When you are walking, or carrying something, or doing ANY part of this rite, that is where your mind must be, and you must NEVER hurry any part of this. Take your time and really get deeply involved in every detail.

Now you return to the center, and face the altar. Hold your hands out toward it, and slowly approach it, kneeling once at the eastern edge of the circle, which is also a tip of the triangle. As you kneel, cross your hands on your chest. Say, silently,

**"You chewed off the Goat's Tail;
The spear-leek grew in the print of your hoof.
You gave the serpent's gift to the foremother and forefather of us all
You came from above, and rule over a kingdom below,
Bless me, deliverer whose flesh and blood I have always eaten."**

Now comes the fun part. Standing, you begin to go in a counterclockwise steady pace around the circle, but you must chant something as you do- a quaint thing someone taught me that goes like this:

"...Hobbe ho Hou, John 'i co!, Hobbe ho Hou Kern!"

Phonetically, you would say

HOB. HO. HOO. JOHN EH KO. HOB. HO. HOO. KERN.

You must go around the circle chanting this, and when you reach an implement, such as the cord, or the Arthame, or the cup and bowl, you have to take a short leap over it, more like a short hop. Don't get going too fast; stay with the steady chant and pacing, and the sounds. Your awareness has to be with whatever you are doing at any given moment, totally, and you must do each action, meaningfully and with full attention and slow, steady deliberateness.

You have to make three rounds like this, then stop in the east, and face the altar. Bow once, then return to the center.

Kneel and place your hands on the ground in the same triangle shape you put them in at the beginning. Slowly chant

AH. KARE. UH.

Then, slowly lift your hands, keeping that triangle shape, until they are as high as you can get them, held high above your head, and chant it again:

AH. KARE. UH.

Then put your hands down to your sides and face the altar again, and see what you can see. Some people see the Horned One himself there, attracted by all this witchery; others prefer to visualize him; some do both. If you have done this rite properly, with full steadiness, ease and depth of motion, and with FULL awareness of every single solitary infernal sound, motion, and action, I can assure you, you will be in a fine trance state, and no doubt shaking hooves with the great Being I have come to fondly refer to as "Father".

The real way to end this delightful rite is to retrieve the bowl and cup from the west, and place them down in the center of the triangle before you, and pour some dark ale in the cup, and raise it to the Altar, chanting the formula

OZ. AH. EL.

As you lift it, and chanting that once over the cup before you lift it.

Then, you drink half of the cup, and pour the rest in the bowl. You carry the bowl to the east, and leave it either on the altar, or on the ground before the altar. Some find that if you concentrate on some goal you need to accomplish or on something you need taken care of before you drink and then share the ale, things have a funny way of working out for you- that is, if you have FULL awareness of everything you have done, and even full awareness as you share this Ale with the Old One.

I know this rite sounds long and complex the first time you read it, but I can assure you it is not. I have done it many times; it is very short and simple, but NOT "easy" if you don't have a mind that can be disciplined to be in ONE place at once- that is, the Here and Now- and if you don't command full awareness. The best part about this rite is that it can be done with only the four needed tools, and the rest, such as the circle and the altar, can all be visualized, if needs be. A simple dance for a powerful trance.